



INDEXA

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Summer 2016

www.indexa.org

Issue 114

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for the enhancement of amateur radio, worldwide peace, and friendship

INDEXA

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The Antipodes Island project was carried out through a partnership with the Department of Conservation (DOC) of New Zealand. Our team of four (Cezar, VE3LYC; Craig, VK5CE; Stan, SQ8X; and Bob, KD1CT) received the permission to land and operate two radio stations for a period of four days. While we covered the transportation cost for a 6-member DOC crew and a lot of building materials they had to bring on the island, we benefited from their on-site logistics, includ-

Antipodes Island Project—2016 (ZL9A) By Cezar Trifu, VE3LYC



Cezar (VE3LYC), Stan (SQ8X), Craig (VK5CE), and Bob (KD1CT) break out the INDEXA flag in front of the Castaway Depot on Antipode Island.

ing being allowed to operate from the Castaway Depot, using their generators, batteries, etc. The team met in Invercargill on January 2, underwent an in-depth quarantine the next day, and boarded on January 4, in Dunedin, the 82-ft yacht Evohe, operated by a crew of five. Sailing to the island took under two and a half days in what those familiar to the Southern Ocean would consider "smooth" seas. Yet, those seas were enough even for an 82-ft boat to cause significant discomfort for some of both our team and the DOC team for much of the voyage.

We arrived at the Antipodes in the evening, and it was quite windy at the time of our arrival. Our team was extremely keen to land at least a few members immediately—despite the fact that we realized that by the time we would reach camp we would be installing antennas using headlamps. However, the DOC team had a dif-

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inside... *The INDEXA DXpedition fund and the NEW INDEXA Humanitarian Fund*

Antipodes Island Project—2016 (ZL9A) (con'd)



Team ZL9A with Bob (ZL2CA), second from left before leaving Dunedin.

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ferent plan, given their knowledge of the terrain and commonly quickly changing weather conditions. They decided that it was prudent to get all of their cargo transported to the island first and foremost. It took six trips using a single Zodiac inflatable boat to carry to shore all the construction materials and a large water tank to be installed for collecting rain water in the camp. To do these transports, five of the DOC team went for a wet landing. Once on the island they secured the materials, and then cut some of the high grasses to make room for the climb and crossing to the camp site. After that, they transported all the gear and materials to the camp, working well into the night. The sea was calmer in the morning when the radio team went for a dry landing, enabling us to step onto a long ledge at low tide. We moved our gear and personal effects up the rocks and into the camp very quickly thanks to the preparations done earlier.

Our visit to the island served two purposes. We wished to provide radio contacts to the amateur community for both DXCC and IOTA needs. The DOC team plan had components of scientific investigation and building reconstruction. Their team was composed of six members: two scientists, an assistant to the scientists, and three builders. The construction was necessitated to provide repairs to

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Our well founded vessel, Evohe, leaves Dunedin en-route to the Antipodes Islands.

Antipodes of What?

The island group was originally called the "Penantipodes" meaning "next to the antipodes", because it lies near to the antipodes of London. Over time the name has been shortened to "Antipodes" leaving some to suppose its European discoverers had not realized its global location. This misapprehension persists. In fact, the island's antipodes are situated on the territory of the French village Gatteville-le-Phare, near Cherbourg. —Wikipedia

The *INDEXA Newsletter* is a quarterly publication of the International DX Association. INDEXA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Copyright 2016



INDEXA

Editor & Publisher

John Scott, K8YC; 221 Berach Place
Mooresville, NC 28115 USA
veep@indexa.org

Distribution & Circulation

Dick Williams, W3OA
398 Lakeview Shores Loop
Mooresville, NC 28117 USA
secretary@indexa.org

Send change-of-address information and membership applications to Secretary-Treasurer, Dick Williams, W3OA.

Address general correspondence to President Gary Dixon, K4MQG, at gdixon@comporium.net.

Antipodes Island Project—2016 (ZL9A) (con'd)



On the morning of our landing, the seas had calmed compared to what the DOC crew faced the night before.

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a hut used by DOC personnel during periodic visits. The hut had suffered damage a year earlier due to a massive landslide. The scientists were to pursue studies of albatross breeding habits.

Once ashore, we were independent of Evohe. The crew and boat stood offshore and moored at different



To the left is the hut where meals were prepared and eaten. Our radio “shack” is the smaller shed to the right.

spots around the island offering protection from the ever-changing winds. The DOC hut contained facilities for meal preparation, and the DOC team prepared meals for all. The radio team—except the on-duty operator—joined the DOC team for meals. The on-duty operator was served his meals a little later. Because of the relatively short time ashore, the radio team supplemented their needs for nourishment throughout the night with power bars and snacks to maintain good energy levels.

With the help of Bob, ZL2CA, the team was able to secure the special callsign ZL9A for this operation. Between January 6, 23:49 UTC and January 10, 17:10 UTC, ZL9A made 8648 QSOs with 5476 unique stations in 101 DXCC entities—69% via SSB and 31% via CW. The equipment used included Icom IC-7000 transceivers, one amplifier, and vertical wire antennas. In order to maximize the number of unique stations logged, we decided to use the high power station on 20 m SSB for as long as the band would stay open, while the other station moved around during the day, and stayed on 30/40 m at night. Additionally, we operated only SSB on 10 m and 20 m, and only CW on 30 m and 40 m, with a mix of SSB and CW on 15 and 17 m. I ended up making all our CW contacts. The log includes 37% QSOs with EU, 32% with AS, 22% with NA, almost 7% with OC and 2% with SA, and less than 1% with AF.

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Our antenna farm before the winds started shaking it too vigorously.

Antipodes Island Project—2016 (ZL9A) (con'd)

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The weather changed rapidly on the island. During our third day we encountered severe winds and heavy rain. In order to change bands, the antennas had to be taken down and the wires got easily entangled in the 1.5-2 m tall grass. Some radials broke, and repairing them was very challenging, since the cold temperature and wind wouldn't allow our electrical soldering iron to get sufficiently hot to ensure a proper job. Luckily, the DOC team had a gas heated one, which helped with antenna repair work. We studied the propagation to various parts of the world in advance. Accordingly, we had a good grasp of which areas of the world would be difficult to reach from Antipodes Is.



Hour after hour, we worked the bands from our hut to give as many contacts as we could to all who could hear us.

The top DXCCs by numbers of contacts in the log were JA (2518), K (1759), UA (502), DL (471), and VK (261), and by number of unique stations K (1296), JA (1116), UA (374), DL (350), and I (184).



The heat capacity of our electric soldering iron was insufficient to create a good solder joint in the cold climate of the Antipodes. Fortunately, the DOC team had a gas heated iron which fulfilled our needs for repairs caused by high winds.

From various posts on the DX Cluster, forums, and email messages received, it was apparent that quite a few DXers didn't read our statements prior to the operation. We indicated that we wouldn't have real-time internet communication on the island, and that all re-

quests should go through Johan, PA3EXX, our pilot station. Moreover, we were completely open about the bands and modes we would be operating on, which were not to include 6m, 80m and 160m as well as digital modes. As such, it is difficult to understand why various operators kept requesting and awaiting for something we never offered in the first place. Finally, we made it well known what equipment we would be allowed to use, given the limitations set forth by the DOC. We carefully watched band openings and had periodic discussions to ensure that our operators gave all regions of the world a fair chance at logging ZL9A.

We knew the duration of the expedition was tied to the schedule of the DOC personnel completing their scientific studies and construction projects. Our day of departure came on the tail of the Southern Ocean storm that had pounded us for several days and given rise to the antenna damage discussed earlier. The seas were still quite "confused" on our day of departure, causing our extraction from the island to take longer than anticipated. The extra time to carefully land the Zodiac in the rough seas caused us to extend our departure beyond low tide which then swamped the use-

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Antipodes Island Project—2016 (ZL9A) (con'd)

To the right is what the seas looked like on our departure day. The relatively placid seas of our arrival were not to be found. Our convenient stone ledge was covered by tons of water from breaking waves. The care needed in timing the loading of the Zodiac extended the departure time causing us to get well beyond the time of low tide. Without this, it wouldn't be DXpeditioning!



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ful ledge we had been able to use for our initial landing. With the larger waves present at our loading point, loading equipment and people required timing the activities with the breaking of the seas on the shore.

With all equipment aboard and all people aboard, we began our three day journey back to the starting point. The first night out was quite uncomfortable. Seas were running with waves of 3 to 4 meters—10 feet to 13 feet. The best place to be was in a bunk whether one was seasick or not, but we had to strap ourselves into our bunks to avoid being thrown onto the cabin sole by the wave action. Even though my bunk was in the bow pounding into the seas, I was so exhausted from our radio operations that I quickly fell asleep. The journey was felt worse by the team members prone to sea sickness, but every one of us made it back safe and sound.

By bringing Antipodes Is. on the air, team ZL9A succeeded not only to activate this remote and off limits IOTA group (OC-286) for the first time, but also contribute to the renaming of the ZL9 DXCC entity as *New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Islands*. The support offered to the DOC has enabled them to be better prepare for the mouse eradication campaign scheduled this coming May, and continue their albatross monitoring and research work. We wish to extend our thanks to the Board of Directors of DOC for their

exceptional support. We remain indebted to Kath Walker for her enthusiasm and tireless effort to establish this partnership. Graeme Elliot is thanked for his technical, on-site support.

We want to express our gratitude to all our group donors, which include GDXF, IREF, TCDXA, ORCA, Chiltern DX Club, DX News, SWODXA, **INDEXA**, Icom Canada, SDXF, Clipperton DX Club, WVDXA, South German DX Group, Danish DX Group, Carolina DX Association, Eastern Iowa DXA, Lone Star DXA, SEDXC, EUDXF, Northern Indiana DXA, OHDXF, Oklahoma DXA, Tokyo 610 DX Group, Villemette Valley DX Club, Southeast Michigan DXA, Most Wanted DX, Venus IT (China), Portuguese DX Group, and 599 DXA. We remain indebted to W3AWU, JM1PXG, I1SNW, and ZS1FJ for their extraordinary financial support, to our top donors—5B4AHJ, AB6QM, AD5A, DJ8NK, G3NUG, I2YDX, JA5IU, JF4VZT, JJ8DEN, K0VXU, N4II, N6AWD, N8JV, OE3EVA, OE3SGA, OE3WWB, PA3EXX, PT7WA, SM3DMP, SM3NXS, SM5AQD, SM6CVX, VE7QCR, W1NG, W4ATL, W5BOS, W5PF, W6SZN, WB2YQH, and WC6DX—for their exceptional generosity, and to many other stations who helped us offset the huge costs associated with this project.

73,

Cezar, VE3LYC

The INDEXA DXpedition Fund and The NEW INDEXA Humanitarian Fund

INDEXA's goal since its founding has been to "help make DX happen". About a year ago INDEXA was granted status as a corporation with a tax-deductible status for U. S. taxpayers under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code. Tax deductibility of a donation provides an incentive for bequests from estates or various other methods of making outright donations from persons who have a strong desire to see DXing grow and thrive.

In the past year, INDEXA has been the fortunate recipient of a sizable donation to support approved humanitarian components of the DXpeditions we support. This new fund is called the INDEXA Humanitarian Fund and bears the tag line "Hams with Hearts". Similarly, INDEXA hopes to substantially increase its ability to support DXpedition operations through our INDEXA DXpedition Fund. Because almost half of the costs to activate rare and semi-rare entities are usually borne by DXpeditioners, financial help from organizations like INDEXA appears to be one way to help ensure thriving and continuing DXpedition activity in an era of rising costs.

INDEXA is already finding that tax deductibility is leading members to be a little more generous. Indeed, in the past year there has been an increase in the number of members including a donation with their annual dues payment. Thanks to all who have done that! There are other ways you can continue to help.

For those who have the means and have provided for their

loved ones in their estate planning, you can also lend a hand to INDEXA by creating a bequest from your estate in the event of your passing.

Additionally, Let me reiterate a few methods spelled out in the Summer 2015 (Issue 110) newsletter.

CASH is King. Cash is always welcome. If you itemize your deductions, a cash donation may reduce your net tax bill in some proportion to your marginal income tax bracket. And, it need not be given in a lump sum if periodic payments work better for you.

Appreciated Stock. Shares of appreciated stock are tax deductible if you itemize your deductions.

Life Insurance. If you have a life insurance policy in force, making INDEXA a partial or total beneficiary of the policy when it matures is a simple way to make a commitment to INDEXA.

Retirement or 401(k) proceeds. If your financial needs and those of your family are well funded, you might consider donating the residuals of an IRA or 401(k) plan to INDEXA.

IMPORTANT NOTE: In all cases, please consult with your financial and legal professionals when setting any of these plans in force.

Thanks for your consideration. 73,
John Scott, K8YC
INDEXA Vice President

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